PHONETICS

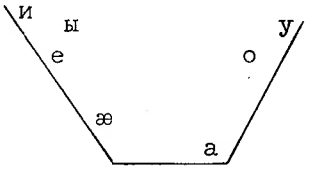
§ 1. The total number of phonemes in the Ossetic literary language is defined as 35. Of these, 7 are vowels, 2 are semi-vowels, and 26 are consonants.

Vowels

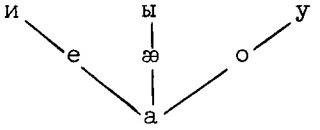
§ 2. The vowels are differentiated by tongue position (front, back, and central), tongue height (low, mid, and high), lip-involvement (labialized and unlabialized), width of mouth and lip opening (open and close), and by duration or quantity (short and long).

§ 3. The system of vowels in Ossetic can be presented in the following diagram (based on V. S. Sokolova):

['59 ed.]



['52 ed.]



We have, then, two front vowels е и, three central а æ ы, and two back о у. The last two are characterized in addition by lip-rounding and are labialized.

The vowels are distinguished according to the amount of openness; they differ as follows: а is open, æ (midway between а and е) is closer, е ы о are still more close, and finally come и у.

Consonants

§ 10. The following table represents the consonant system of Ossetic:

CONSONANTS	Stop						Fricative		Nasal	Liquid	
	Plain			Affricate							
	Voiceless	Voiced	Glottalized	Voiceless	Voiced	Glottalized	Voiceless	Voiced			
Bilabial	п	б	пъ				ф	в	м		
Dental	т	д	тъ	ц	дз	цъ			н		
Prepalatal							с	з		л	р
Mediopalatal				ч	дж	чъ					
Postpalatal	к	г	къ								
Velar	хъ						х	гъ			

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